TWELVE-FOOT DAVIS

OPEN: MUSIC, ~~[illegible]~~: Desent Victory - IB. - 20' - in 7

NARRATOR: (In a slow, quiet voice) Did you know there was a giant in Alberta?

Voice: A giant?

Woman's Voice: A real giant?

Voice: A big giant?

Man's Voice: (Slowly) What was his name?

NARRATOR: His name was ..... Twelve-foot Davis.

Voice: Twelve foot?

Woman: Twelve feet high?

Voice: That's big all right.

NARRATOR: And when he talked.....

UNDER

Voice: I'll bet when he talked he shook the world!

WOMAN: Like thunder?

NARRATOR: When he talked he talked like this.....

DAVIS: (In a high-pitched, small voice) MY name's twelve-foot Davis!

Voice: Why he's just a little fellow!

VOICE: He's no giant!

VOICE: (Scornfully) Twelve feet high!

NARRATOR: And when he walked.....he walked like this.....

SOUND: SEVERAL VERY LIGHT FOOTSTEPS.

VOICE: Huh! Doesn't make as much noise as I do!

NARRATOR: He was a giant, just the same!

MUSIC - Up 10' Fade Slowly

NARRATOR: No, not a big giant.....just a man. Just about like you, maybe.....or me.....

DAVIS: Why do you call me a giant?

NARRATOR: Because if they measured you in the memories of the folks that knew you....you'd be a thousand feet tall, and the biggest thing about you would be your heart.

DAVIS: I wasn't <u>anybody</u>.

NARRATOR: You weren't anybody, to start with.....you were just a cook, in Boston, Massachusetts.

DAVIS: My specialty was punkin pie. Yankees like punkin pie.

NARRATOR: You made the best punkin pie in all the U. S. A.

VOICE: In <u>all</u> the U. S. A?

VOICE: <u>Everywhere?</u> In Maine and Massachusetts? Georgia and Alabama?

VOICE: New Hampshire and Connecticut?

NARRATOR: In <u>all</u> the U. S. A.

DAVIS: I wasn't <u>anybody</u>. Who cares who cooks a pie?

VOICE: How'd he get his name? Twelve-foot Davis?

VOICE: Somebody must've thought he was a giant!

NARRATOR: It was like this.....in 1849 somebody found gold!

DAVIS: That was California. I was there.

NARRATOR: The wagon trains went west! The boats went round the cape! Men gave their lives for California gold. A few got rich!

DAVIS: Not me!

NARRATOR: And later on, up B. C. way.....

DAVIS: Cariboo Creek!

NARRATOR: At Cariboo Creek they found more gold!

DAVIS: I was there, too!

NARRATOR: Yes, you were there.....

<u>MUSIC, 20 seconds.</u> Desert Victory – 1A. – in 8.

VOICE: Boys, this Cariboo Creek strike's the biggest yet!

VOICE: Joff Armstrong took out $40,000 today!

VOICE: Where? Where's his claim?

VOICE: What're we waiting for? Let's get out and dig! Get out of my way, runt!

DAVIS: Don't shove me!

NARRATOR: Why'd you let that fellow push you, Twelve-foot Davis?

DAVIS: He was big. I was only a.....cook!

VOICE: He made punkin pie!

Voice: (Scornfully) Twelve-foot Davis! A giant! A cook-stove giant!

NARRATOR: And all the claims were gone.

DAVIS: Everybody staked everything.

NARRATOR: Except you.

DAVIS: I went around to everybody. But they.....

Voice: On your way, runt!

VOICE: Get off my claim!

VOICE: Hey you! Want to stop a bullet? Git!

DAVIS: There wasn't anything for me. I just sat down.

Voice: Weakling!

Voice: Dreamer!

DAVIS: I just sat down and looked at the trees and the hills. The water and the birds. I saw beauty. But I wanted gold.

Voice: (Scornfully) Who doesn't?

NARRATOR: Why'd you want gold, Twelve-foot Davis?

DAVIS: I wanted gold....to help little fellows like me.

Voice: That's a laugh!

DAVIS: I wanted gold to help give kids a start. I wanted gold to outfit poor men. Honest men.

VOICE: You didn't have a thing yourself. Dreamer!

DAVIS: But I got gold. And I got a name. Y' see, I hated a cheat. I hated dishonesty. And when I saw that two of the richest claims at Cariboo covered too much ground, it made me mad.

NARRATOR: What'd you do, Twelve-foot?

DAVIS: Went out at night and measured 'em off. Discovery claims one and two. They covered twelve feet too much ground.

VOICE: Twelve feet? Only twelve feet?

DAVIS: I staked that twelve-foot strip myself.

Voice: And that was all you got. Twelve feet.

DAVIS: Twelve feet, and twenty thousand dollars worth of gold.

MUSIC, ~~ten~~ 20 seconds. Desert Victory — 2A — in 8.

NARRATOR: Know what it is that makes a common, ordinary man a giant? Is it gold? Is it brains? Is it brawn? Is it power? Is it greed? Is it force? Or is it just a spark in the heart of a humble man that makes him know that everybody ought to have a chance.

VOICE: Is that all it takes to make a giant?

NARRATOR: I'm asking you. What'd you do with your twenty-thousand, Twelve-foot?

DAVIS: Been so long ago, I can't recall.....

VOICE: I got some of it.

NARRATOR: Who're you?

VOICE: I was just a nobody. Drifter. Hung around, gambling when I could get a stake....

DAVIS: I remember you, now. Found you dead drunk up against a rock. What'd you do with the thousand dollars I gave you?

VOICE: I....took up a homestead, got married, had two kids and named both of 'em Twelve-foot!

DAVIS: Well I'll be dog-goned!

MUSIC, ~~ten~~ 20 seconds. Keltic Overture — F9 — pencil Cue.

Out Slowly.

NARRATOR: You see how it goes? Davis gave away nickle of that twenty-thousand. Some of it was gambled and drunk...sure. Probably a lot of it. But some of it went for good, and I guess everybody who got a slice of that money, remembered the little fellow who was famous.....for making punkin pies. Where'd you go from B. C., Twelve-foot?

DAVIS: Went to the Peace River Country. Ever been there?

NARRATOR: Can't say as I have.

DAVIS: It's the widest, most beautiful land in all the world. I'm buried up there, you know. On that high hill way up above Peace River town. There's a view! I look up river and down, and my eyes won't carry all the distance there is to see. And when I look, I recall all I used to do. York boatin' on the river, or taking a raft down to Vermilion in the spring.....tradin' with the Indians, and more'n anything, making friends.....I knew everybody. Everybody. Used to tell my friend Jim Cornwall I wanted to be buried up here....and sure enough, here I am!

VOICE: Still can't see why Twelve-foot Davis is a giant.

NARRATOR: You ever hear of faith in man? That could help make a giant. One time, up in the Peace Country, a terrible blizzard was blowin'.....

SOUND: WIND - In 10' - High - 2nd Cut - 1st Side. - in 1½.

wind Under

MAN'S VOICE: How much farther we got to go?

VOICE: Not far. There's a cabin around here somewhere.

Voice: Can't make much farther. Feet are frozen.

VOICE: So're mine, I guess.

VOICE: Whose cabin is it?

VOICE: Fellow named Davis. Queer little runt.

VOICE: Maybe he's locked the place up tight.

Wind Under VOICE: Nope.

VOICE: How can you be so sure?

Voice: I know. If we can make Davis's place, we're all right.

Voice: Look! There's something.....Yep! There she is!

Voice: It's the cabin. Come on!

WIND FADES DOOR OPENING

VOICE: You're right. No bar on this door. Plenty of firewood. And grub! Plenty of grub! Say, how were you so sure this place would be unlocked?

VOICE: Twelve-foot Davis has been in this country for more'n twenty years. Anybody can get grub at his place, and he's never been known to lock his cabin door!

MUSIC, ~~ten~~ 20 seconds. Desert Victory – 2A. – in 8.

DAVIS: No sir, I never locked my cabin door. I lost a few things, sure. But not much. If you have faith in other people, they'll do the same by you...most of 'em.
I tell you one thing I had, though, that was like a giant. That was my memory. Couldn't read nor write. But I never forgot anything.

VOICE: I thought a giant had to be strong!

NARRATOR: It's a matter of spirit. Like the time on that portage, Twelve-foot. Some of the men wanted to lie down on the job....

MAN: I will not carry this horse's load any farther! A man twice my size could not pack it!

DAVIS: Let me have your load.

MAN: What? (LAUGHING) Why you little runt you couldn't even lift it off the ground! That pack weighs over two-hundred pounds!

DAVIS: Let me have it.

MAN: (LAUGHING) Take it and welcome. Watch his knees buckle, boys! Want me to sling it on your shoulders for you, runt?

DAVIS: No. Follow me, you men.

Voice: He did it! He's packing it! That's one on you, Jim!

SOUND: LAUGHTER

MAN: The runt, he is stouter than he looks. (LAUGHING) All right, boys, if he can pack on this trail, so can we. Come on! FADE MIKE.

NARRATOR: (Softly) Yes, Twelve-foot Davis, you had spirit. You had faith in man. You had a generous heart....things important in the making of a giant. But a greater thing than any of these you had.....you knew that you had lived a full life....and a life of good deeds to your fellow men. One thing you were always afraid of... BACK UP MIKE

DAVIS: I was afraid of dying a pauper.

NARRATOR: When you died, you had nothing. But you did not fear death.

MUSIC: 20" (Soft, possibly of a religious nature) - Andante - 2. - pencil Cue

MINISTER: (Softly) How's the old man this evening?

LADY MISSIONARY: He's very low, Reverend Brick.

MINISTER: Well, he's lived a long life.

LADY: I think he's completely blind now.

DAVIS: My eyes were closed. Maybe I was blind. But I could see, too. I could see that view at Peace River. I could see the old house in Boston where I used to live. I could see the diggings at Cariboo Creek. I could see most of my life, I guess. I could see Jim Cornwall, and I wondered whether he'd remember his promise to carry me up to the top of that hill when I died.....

MINISTER: Has he any money?

Music Under

LADY: He hasn't a penny.

MINISTER: What's the old fellow done with his money? I've heard legends about him....once they say, he mined twenty thousand dollars worth of gold.....

Music Under

DAVIS: I didn't want a pauper's death. The missionaries took care of me, but it was a pauper's death just the same. But somehow....I couldn't keep any money. Too many people needed help.....

LADY: He hasn't any relatives, of course.

MINISTER: You'd better go in to him.....ask him if he wants you to pray.

LADY: Yes, Reverend ~~Brick~~.

~~AFTER A LITTLE PAUSE, RESUMING~~ MUSIC UP 5'.

LADY: Mr. Davis.....Mr. Davis....

DAVIS: Yes, Ma'am?

LADY: Mr. Davis.....are you afraid to die?

DAVIS: Afraid to die, Ma'am? No, Ma'am.

Music Under

LADY: Mr. Davis...do you hear me? I asked.....

DAVIS: I heard you, Ma'am.....heard you clear as a bell. And I ain't afraid to die, Ma'am. Why should I be afraid to die? I never killed nobody. I never cheated nobody. I never wilfully harmed nobody, and I always kept open house for travellers...all of my life. No, Ma'am. I ain't afraid to die.

MUSIC, ~~fifteen~~ 20' seconds. Music Fade. Andante - 2.

NARRATOR: (Softly) You died that night, Twelve-foot Davis.

DAVIS: I wasn't dead. I could see everything, and hear, too. I went everywhere, and heard what people were saying about me. I felt proud....and happy. I went down to the river..... Some of the boys were down there.....

MAN: Well, the old man's gone at last.

2nd MAN: Yep.

1st MAN: He leaves an awful hole here in the Peace Country. His memory will live up here in the north for a thousand years, I guess.

2nd Man: It'll live as long as one man can help another. That's what the name of Twelve-foot Davis means.

DAVIS: You see why I was proud and happy?
I went to Edmonton...to Frank Oliver's office in the Bulletin. He was opening a letter.

FRANK OLIVER: (~~RUSTLING PAPER~~) Twelve-foot Davis. Dead!

VOICE: Who's Twelve-foot Davis?

Oliver: Twelve-foot Davis was the generousity of the frontier. Get out on Jasper Avenue and see if you can find Jim Cornwall. Tell him I want to see 'im right away. If he's not on Jasper Avenue, look in the Alberta Hotel.

VOICE: Yes, Mr. Oliver.

OLIVER: (Softly) Twelve-foot Davis.....dead.

DAVIS: That's right, Frank Oliver. Tell Jim Cornwall. Tell Jim Cornwall not to forget his promise to take me up to that high hill. He'll know what you mean.

OLIVER: You were a great man, Twelve-foot. Been a lot of great men up in the North.....brave men, pioneers, pathfinders... Mackenzie, David Thompson, Harmon, Archibald Macleod, Fraser, Bishop Grouard, John Gough Brick, Fletcher Bredin.... Monkman; these men were brave...giants in their deeds..... but maybe you were the greatest giant of them all. Your ambition was just....being a friend to man....any man.

MUSIC ↓ - 20' - Andante - 1. - in 2.

KNOCK AT DOOR

Slow Fade.

LADY
MISSIONARY: Come in.

JIM
CORNWALL: Morning. I'm Jim Cornwall.

LADY: How do you do, Mr. Cornwall. Please sit down.

JIM: I....I came after my friend.

LADY: He said you'd come, Mr. Cornwall.

DAVIS: I've been waiting, Jim.....

JIM: I have a wagon outside....want to take him to Peace River.

DAVIS: First time I ever made the trip from Slave Lake to Peace River... lyin' down in a box. Well, let's get started, Jim.

JIM: Have a stone out in the wagon, too. People're going to remember, Twelve-foot Davis.

DAVIS: What writing's on that stone, Jim?

JIM: Have an inscription on that stone, too. It'll help make folks remember....

LADY: Come this way, Mr. Cornwall.

MUSIC ← 20' - Andante - 1 - in 2.

~~SOUND OF WAGON WHEELS AS MUSIC FADE. CONTINUE UNTIL FOLLOWING~~

DAVIS: Mighty bumpy, Jim. Take it easy over those rocks, can't you? Always was a wearisome trip...but I'm tired now, awful tired. Just want to rest.....this old road. It'll go down in history I guess. Seen plenty o' folks comin' over it....late years specially. Men from back East... farmers...with their outfits and their machines; their women and kids. Women! In the Peace River Country! That seems mighty strange....always was a land for men. But we're glad to see the women-folks. They'll make homes, and the land is good....deep soil, black as coal, some of it. Jim, I see a country of wavin' grain and barns....towns. Schools for

Music Under.

Music Under

the kids. They'll read and write. All of 'em. won't have to carry everything around in their heads like I used to. Almost there, Jim! Four days, from Cave Lake to Peace River. Well, maybe they'll have a railroad soon. I can't know how they'll build her over the mountains, but they will. Can see to anything if he puts himself to it. There she is, Jim! There's the Valley of the Peace. And there's my hill, there on the right. See it? Nine-hundred feet she is.....towerin' right over the whole valley! Slow Fade

JIM: ....all right, boys, we'll take the box up first, then we'll come after the stone.

LUKE: Jim's got some trees to help him. I believe were my best friends, I have.

DAVID: Lift me easy, boys. Get a good grip. It'll be a hard pull to the top of that hill.....

20' Andante-1-in 2 Fade Music into Wind.

LUKE: [illegible]

JIM: Well, boys that's that. Wind's comin' up. It'll blow here up here. Anyone we better be goin'. Sort of hate to leave. It's a lonely place, but it's where the old man wanted to be.

Wind Under.

LUKE: Wait a minute, Jim. Hold on. Tell me, what's that writin' on the stone? It's a fine stone....looks like a true friend. Read the writin' to me, Jim.....

JIM: The inscription on the stone'll make people remember him.... (Slowly) Twelve-foot Davis. Born, Vermont...(He was a Yankee) Died at Dawson, 1898. Pathfinder, pioneer, minor and trader. He was every man's friend, and never locked his cabin door.....

Wind Under

Davis: That's nice, Jim. Thanks.

Jim: Goodbye, Twelve-foot Davis.

Davis: Good bye, Jim.....

20' New World Largo - Pencil Cue.

[redacted]

[redacted]: And that's the story of a giant. Yes, he was a real giant. He wasn't big, like Paul Bunyan. When Paul yelled, it sounded like this.....

[redacted]: (Big slow yelling, like an echo) T-i-m-b-e-r!!!

[redacted]: And when Paul called it sounded like this:

Cut 1. 5018 — in 4 — in 2 Cracks - 10'

[redacted]: At nine Twelve-foot Davis talked.....

Davis: I'm Twelve-foot Davis.....

[redacted]: .....I pricked just like a little Yellow star and it is him to be a giant.....and was a giant.....so to folks who visit Twelve-foot's grave on that high hill, he's a real, honest-t-goodness big giant because.....well it's like this...

[redacted] — 20' — Largo — Pencil Cue.

Boy: Here we are. Gee, what a slide!

Girl: Here's the "Boom" it slid so much we could see from the pond. It has some writing on it

Boy: What's it say?

Girl: (reads) Twelve-foot Davis.....

Boy: Twelve-foot! A giant!

Girl: Twelve feet high! Wow!

Boy: I guess he was bigger'n Paul Bunyan!

Girl: Bigger'n Samson!

Boy: Here's Mike as tall as I am. I'll bet they'd be yelled....

Narrator: (In big voice) You see, they don't know what we know. That Twelve-foot Davis was a little boy, and the giant part of him was only his heart!

Up Slowly Throughout. LARGO. Pencil Cue.

Peak - 10'. — FADE.

[illegible]

[illegible]: Cold Eye, Twelve-Foot Davis.

Music Swell.

ANN.

THEME.

1. A Northern Giant

One of the great views of the world is the view from the top of the valley above Peace River town. The Peace River received its name when the Crees, Beavers and Slave Indians entered into a lasting peace pact; and the atmosphere of peace seems to dominate the whole vast panorama.

Looking up-river there is a great softness in the sky and the land. The hills are gentle. The mountain waters of the Peace join the waters of the Smoky . . . together they rush north; toward Vermilion; toward the Northern sea.

In this gentle atmosphere of peace it is easy to understand the spirit of good-fellowship and faith imaged in so many of the northern tales. I could believe the tale of the pioneer who left his watch hanging on the branch of a tree while camping on the trail. It was two or three weeks before he could get back to the same spot, and, of course, he thought the watch would be missing. But when he returned

he found the watch hanging exactly as he had left it, and what is more, it was running! Someone had come along and wound it for him.

On this height above the Peace a sentinel stands guard. This sentinel is the monument to Twelve Foot Davis, the prospector and trader who, more than any other, seems to symbolize the generosity and faith of the country.

On a quiet November morning we climbed the hill to Twelve Foot's grave. When we reached the rough rails surrounding the stone, a gentle wind sprang up, and in its whisper we seemed to hear the tale of this man whose name has become a Peace River legend.

Twelve Foot Davis was not a giant as many believe. He was, in fact, not even a large man. Through the legends he has become a true giant; totally unlike Paul Bunyan. For Paul performed miraculous deeds through his strength and his size; while Twelve Foot performed only deeds of generosity and kindness.

Twelve Foot Davis got his name in this way. In 1849 he followed the gold rush to California, and later moved on up to the Cariboo Creek gold mining district in British Columbia. After he had arrived there and had had a chance to look over the claims that had been already staked, the thought struck him that two of the claims covered too much ground. So one dark night he carefully stepped off the areas of Discovery Claim, and Claim No. 1 from Discovery, and found, sure enough, that they covered twelve feet too much territory. He staked on this twelve foot strip for himself and took out $20,000. worth of gold, much of which he probably gave away.

When the gold played out he turned his attention to the fur trade, and became a "free trader" in competition with Hudson's Bay Company and other large concerns. His reputation for fairness was unquestioned and he traded with the Indians successfully for over twenty years. The Indians called him "the wolf" because of his ability to travel long distances, heavily laden, and with very little food.

Davis was a famous cook, and his specialty was pumpkin pie. This might be explained by the fact that he was born in Vermont; at any rate, his "punkin" pies were known far and wide in the Peace River Country. He was never known to turn anyone away from his cabin, and any traveler could be certain of a meal at Twelve Foot's place.

He was no fool, though. Very industrious himself, he expected industry from those around him. On one trip up the Peace with a party, he purchased all the watches in the whole outfit, so none could tell the time, and might, therefore, work longer hours.

Davis feared that he would die a pauper. He dreaded this fate more than anything, but like so many heroes, his greatest good was his greatest evil. He simply gave too much away. When, at last, he came to die, he had nothing.

When he was on his deathbed at Grouard, he was asked by a lady missionary whether he feared to die. Davis answered, "Why should I be afraid to die? I never kilt

nobody, I never stole from nobody, and I kept open house for travelers all of my life. No, Ma'am, I ain't afraid to die."

One thing Davis loved more than anything else was the beautiful view from the top of the Peace River valley above Peace River town. He often told his friend, Colonel Jim Cornwall, that he wanted to be buried on the hill looking up the mighty valley where the Smoky flows into the Peace.

And after Davis died, Cornwall kept his promise. He took up Davis' bones and had them carried to the new grave overlooking the valley Davis loved so much. Jim had a stone made for his friend in the form of a tree trunk and on this stone you may read this legend:

> "H. F. Davis, born Vermont 1820. Died at Slave Lake 1893. Path-finder, Pioneer, Miner and Trader. He was every man's friend, and never locked his cabin door."

No better commentary on the friendliness of the North Country is needed.